

## A RESEARCH ON MENTOR'S EXPERIENCES IN PROVIDING CAREER SUPPORT THROUGH THE MENTORING FOR MULTICULTURAL FAMILIES

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### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this research was to find out the type of career support provided to the mentee by the mentors who participated in the mentoring for multicultural families, and to examine the meaning of what the mentors experienced through such career support. To accomplish such purpose, three mentors who participated in the KorMent mentoring for multicultural families & NK defectors run by I University from May 2015 to December 2015 were selected as the subjects for in-depth interviews. As a result, the meaning was drawn from the career goal as 'finding out mentee's future hope' and 'preparing for future together', from the career counseling as 'finding dreams together' and 'difficult career counseling', and from the career education as 'exploring career information' and 'receiving help from school teachers'. Such result of this research is significant in that the career support not only simply provides mentoring, but that it also helps mentees to become self-aware and develop appropriate sense of values on the nature of career by allowing them to objectively and accurately understand themselves.*

**KEYWORDS:** Multicultural Families, Career Support, Mentoring, Career Counseling, Career Education

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### INTRODUCTION

#### Background/ Objectives and Goals

Starting from the early 2000's, it is not that difficult to find foreigners in the Korean society. The number of foreign population in Korea was 259,805 in 2007. However, this number increased by approximately 6.7 times in approximately 8 years, and the number of foreign population in Korea came out to be 1,741,919 in 2005, meaning that the multicultural society has entered into Korea. Along with the increase in the number of foreign residents, the number of multicultural family children has been increasing as well. According to the statistics on foreign residents by local governments reported by the Ministry of Interior, The number of multicultural family children increased from 121,935 in 2010 to 207,693 in 2015, and this signifies an increase of approximately 85,000 people (Ministry of the Interior, 2015). Increasing multicultural family children are likely to experience difficulties in school life, low self-esteem due to looks different from peers, and difficulties in forming relationship with peers (Kim & Park, 2011; An, Lee & Lim, 2013; Kim & Park, 2009). To resolve such difficulties, Korea Student Aid Foundation has been playing a leading role in providing the mentoring for multicultural families and NK defector students, in understanding linguistic communications experienced by multicultural family students as well as their academic skills and relationship, and in improving perception of people on the multicultural along with personality, counseling and career support (Korea Student Aid Foundation, 2015).

Mentoring is influenced by the characteristics of mentor and mentee, and the mutual interaction between

mentor and mentee can vary the effects of mentoring (Lim & Park, 2015). Initially, it was found that the mentor enforces responsibility and leadership as a mentor as one expands its boundary of experience, and that one's attitude and perception on the multicultural society improves as one's self-efficacy increases. And mentees showed changes in self-esteem, forming relationship with peers, and adapting to school life (Seo & Kim, 2008). However, according to the statistics reported by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family in 2013, of the 43,245 multicultural children, studying (29.9%) was listed as the first concern, and occupation (15.8%) was listed as the third concern. As described above, mentees expect support for learning through mentoring, but they also considerably expect career support as well. Accordingly, the purpose of this research is to examine what type of career support is being provided to mentees in the course of mentors performing mentoring activities.

Career can be defined as 'a path toward future', and a similar term 'course' signifies matters involving the future. In addition, it can be interpreted as life, work experience and occupation. However, it normally signifies specialized activities performed by the counselor to stimulate and promote development of individual's career (Song & Cheon, 1995). From such aspect, career goal helps one to become self-aware through an objective and accurate understanding on oneself, and to develop sense of values on an appropriate occupational view and work through understanding type and nature of the job (Kim & Kim, 2015). In other words, career during adolescence is an integrated activity making contributions to adaptation and development through knowledge, function and attitude required depending on one's aptitude and interest (Kim, Hwang, Jang, Kim & Yoon, 2011).

In addition, career counseling is an activity for providing professional advices related to career (school admission, occupation and life), and main concerns involved in such career counseling consist of one's school admission, occupation, learning, personality and leisure. The purpose of such career counseling is to effectively perform career instruction in order to provide support for the individual to become aware of one's potential possibility, to develop such potential possibility to well-select school and occupation, and to live happily by enhancing satisfaction and efficiency (Kim et al, 2011). Career problems to be dealt with in career counseling not only involve occupation selection, but also involve indecisive career determination, work performance, stress, adaptation, relationship, and maladjustment to work environment (Kim & Kim, 2003; Lee & Lee, 2015). From such aspect, precedent researches on the career of multicultural family students can be largely divided into survey researches on the career (Kim, Jyung & Lee 2012; Kim & Chung, 2014; Nam & Choi, 2012; Ryou & Kim, 2015), researches on the career support (Jang & Kim, 2014; Park, Cho & Park, 2013), and researches on the career program (Cho & Ju, 2014; Hong, 2014; Byun, Jung, Chung & Lee, 2011; Kim, 2015). Through precedent researches, it was found that the students who come from multicultural families normally contain lower career perception compared to those students who come from monoculture families. Viewing from such aspect, it can be seen that the KorMent mentoring for multicultural families and NK defectors must cover career support in addition to its activities for providing leaning support and psychological-emotional support through a 1:1 relationship between university student mentor and student mentee. Accordingly, the purpose of this research is to analyze the career support activities provided by mentors to mentees, by dividing such activities into support for setting career goal, support for career counseling involving stress, adaptation and relationship, and support for career education determining the direction of career, in order to figure out the meaning of experiences in providing career support activities.

## METHODS

### Research Motive & Selecting Research Participants

The researcher started to develop his motive for this research while he was participating in the KorMent mentoring for multicultural families and NK defectors run by I University as a tutor. In the initial stage, mentors performed weekly activities. The record of career counseling activities performed by the mentors having middle and high school students as their mentees was observed, and as a result of observing activities of the mentors for approximately 3 months, it was found that the mentors were periodically performing activities related to the career of mentees. Through the observation performed by the researcher, the purpose of this research is to find out how the mentors perform career support, and to find out the meaning of experiences through such career support.

To observe career support experiences of the mentors who participated in the mentoring for Multicultural families, of the mentors who participated in the KorMent mentoring for multicultural families and NK defectors run by I University from May 2015 to December 2015, 3 mentors having experiences in career-related activities for mentees consisting of middle and high school students were selected as the research participants. Characteristics of the research participants are as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Characteristics of Research Participants**

Division	Age	University	Division	Mentee's Age	Nationality of Mentee's Parents	Grade During Mentoring
Mentor A	26	Teacher's College	Mentee a	16	Father/Mother: NK	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade in Middle School
Mentor B	26	Teacher's College	Mentee b	20	Father/Mother: China	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade in High School
Mentor C	21	Engineering College	Mentee c	19	Father: Korea Mother: China	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade in High School

Mentors A and B currently enrolled in a teacher's college. The reason for participating in mentoring varies depending on the mentor. A has been interested in NK defectors even before he participated in mentoring, and he decided to participate based on his interest in multicultural raised after taking a multicultural education class. Mentor B decided to participate because his schoolmate recommended it and also because he desired to submit his participation as education service hours. Mentor C also decided to participate based on his schoolmate's recommendation. Mentor A said that the future hope of his mentee is a police officer, and that his mentee seemed a bit mature compared to his peers. Mentor B said that his mentee's future goal is not so specific. However, he remembered that his mentee desired to live in a foreign country and that he was interested in foreign languages. He also said that his mentee was a 3rd grader in high school during mentoring, and that he is currently enrolled in a university majoring in a department related to the Chinese language. Mentor C introduced his mentee as a 2nd grader in high school who stresses out frequently due to the university entrance examination. In particular, mentor C said that his mentee worries a lot about not having decided his career related to the university entrance examination.

## Data Collection

**Table 2: Questionnaire Contents**

Division	Specific Details	
General Information	Mentor's General Information	Age, Gender, University Classification, and Mentoring Period
	Mentee's General Information	Age, Gender, Grade and Nationality of Parents
	Contents of Mentoring Activities	Thoughts after Participation, Reasons for Participation, Teaching Method, Difficulties, and Communication with Mentee
Career Goal	Future Hope & How to Prepare for Future Hope	
Career Counseling	Career Concerns, Suggestion, Career Perception, Career Exploration, and Difficulties in Career Counseling	
Career Education	Methods for Career Education, Difficulties in Career Education, Methods Used, Teacher's Support, Psychological Tests, Status of Experience Activities, and Alternative Suggestions	

Data collection of this research was based on the subjects consisting of a group in which the researcher participated as a tutor for 3 months from September 2015 to December 2015, and mentors who participated in the outstanding mentoring recital performed in I University in January. For the group of which the research took charge, research participants were selected based on the contents of mentoring activities, and for the other research participants, PPT data presented by the mentors during the outstanding mentoring recital was used as a reference for selecting the research participants.

It took approximately 2 months from January 2016 to February 2016 to select and interview research participants. Interview was recorded after explaining the purpose of this research and receiving the consent from research participants. Interview lasted for 30 minutes to 1 hour, and was only performed once per each research participant. It was performed in a cafe in vicinity of the school, and a small gift was given to those interviewed. Interview was performed in a semi-structured form. Particularity of such semi-structured interview is that its response details and forms are comparatively less limited since the researcher prepares the questionnaire and throws flexible questions depending on reaction of the participant(Yoo, Jeong, Kim & Kim, 2013). Based on such particularity, the semi-structured questionnaire consisted of contents on career education outside the range of career counseling recorded in the details of mentoring activities and such questionnaire Table 2 was prepared based on the ideal career directions shown in the research by Kim et al. (2011), and the subsection factors of career support shown in the research by Jang and Kim(2014).

## Data Analysis

The interview was recorded after receiving the consent from the research participant. The recorded interview audio file was then converted into letters through a recording transfer for a more-in-depth understanding of the interview details. Significant details were deducted by repeatedly reading the interview details converted into letters. For reliability of this research, the significant details deducted from the interviews were repeatedly confirmed by laboratory colleagues, ones having experiences in mentoring, and professors specializing in related departments. Validity of this research was secured through such course.

## RESULTS

The purpose of this research was to examine how mentors provide mentees with career support in multicultural mentoring activities. To accomplish such purpose, career support was divided into career goal, career counseling and career education, and the meaning was drawn from experiences in each of them.

## **CAREER GOAL**

### **Finding out Mentee's Future Hope**

"I want to watch a police officer shoot a gun and I want to do it as well. I have no other reason, but I just want to shoot a gun, subdue a criminal, shoot the bad guys and just do stuff like that. (Omitted)" (Mentor A)

"Mentee said that he wants to go live in many countries, that he likes foreign languages (omitted), and that he wanted to go to college and enjoy college life. At that point, I realized that mentee is not thinking much about his future." (Mentor B)

"He said that he can't choose from so many things he'd like to become. I thought he was thinking toward studying. But he also told me that going to college wouldn't really matter, and that he was interested in physical education (omitted)." (Mentor C)

As described, mentor A accurately knew his future hope. However, as stated by Mentors B and C, some mentees didn't have a clear career path.

### **Preparing for Future Together**

"He said that he'd do okay in studying if he gets good grades. On the very first day, he told me that he studies hard but his grades remain the same. At that moment, I realized that the mentoring should be focused on learning. His school wanted that as well..." (Mentor A)

"All he did was write an essay and cover letter... (Omitted) Mentee was a 3rd grader in high school. So the university entrance exam was the most important issue, and he really wanted to get into a college. It would've been better if he was able to get into a college that he wanted to get into, but it's a shame that my skills were insufficient." (Mentor B)

"It was when he brought a book related to the entrance examination for college of physical education. He showed it to me. He also brought his school report card and we spoke about it. (Omitted) We also went over school studies too, but I guess he thought about it while we were studying as well~" (Mentor C)

Mentors used learning and preparation for entrance examination to support mentees prepare for their future hopes. Mentees were aware of what they lack, and they tended to ask their mentors for support.

## **CAREER COUNSELING**

### **Finding Dreams Together**

"At first, dreams can be vague, and it was that way for me too. I thought that it would be nice to explain how to set dream in a more practical way. Telling good sides to it only causes reverse-effect, so I thought it would be better to tell about the difficulties to it as well in order to help him choose practically suitable occupation (omitted)" (Mentor A)

"I asked him frequently throughout mentoring, but I assume that he has not decided his specific future hope. (omitted)." (Mentor B)

"I advised that he consider options other than the special admission program for the multicultural family applicants such as occasional, regular admissions since he was a regular high school student, and that he receive

specialized education depending on the type of career preferred. He considered this very heavily.”(Mentor C)

Regarding the future goal, mentors A and C gave practical advice on concerns that mentees had in choosing an occupation. Mentor B used a method of continuously questioning his mentee for him to consider his career. Mentor C proposed a method of making diverse suggestions instead of limiting his mentee’s career to the boundary of multicultural.

### **Difficult Career Counseling**

“I spoke before mentee spoke. ‘What would you like to do in your future life?’ The most difficult thing was that he had no specific thought on his future.(omitted) My mentee seemed as though he was not thinking about his future~ So I kept asking him the same question, and that was the most difficult part.. It seemed as though Hao is unaware of what he wants to do the most. I told him that the college isn’t the answer. I told him to get into a college and then think about what you want to do next~ As I said those things, I wasn’t really acting up to my words...”(Mentor B)

“I was very careful because my bias or my sense of values which may be different from what my mentee feels may offend him and cause him to make decisions that do not reflect his own opinions~ (omitted) He was severely stressed out by the fact that he was not able to study properly, and it was very difficult to cheer him up, because I was very stressed out by the same reason too...”(Mentor C)

As mentor B performed career counseling, he looked back upon his past through examining what his mentee lacks in planning the future. Mentor C proceeded cautiously, knowing that his bias and attitude may have negative an influence on mentee’s career.

## **CAREER EDUCATION**

### **Exploring Career Information**

“One of my seniors work as a police officer. We kept in touch and I texted him if it is okay to make a call(omitted) Sometimes I explained after finding it, and I found it almost every time. Immediately, I always carried this when I performed. I always carried this with me and used it to find it.”(Mentor A)

“I mostly told my mentee about what I have seen and heard about. As I mentioned earlier, the things I heard from friends of mine... (omitted) Because these things cannot be searched online... hearing and understanding information that you cannot hear from elsewhere is very...”(Mentor C)

The method most frequently used by mentors A and C to provide their mentees with information on career was to give out information based on experience of actual people currently working in the fields mentees are interested in, or to give out information based on information from the internet.

### **Receiving Help from School Teachers**

“My mentee knew that his future hope was becoming a police officer. But the problem is that he only knew. You know you have to fill out a sheet of paper about your future hope in early semester. He just wrote down his future hope, but that was it. He didn’t do anything in particular to accomplish his future hope~ So his teachers in charge knew about his future hope, but didn’t really seem to care about it... He did not ask for help though.”(Mentor A)

“We mainly spoke about mentee’s entrance examination and didn’t speak much about his career. I used Cacao Talk to communicate with his teacher. I asked the teacher for related data... and things like that.”(Mentor B)

“I didn’t hear once about my mentee sharing career counseling with his teacher in charge.... I guess focusing on learning was very influential. Things were based on his score and performance. Those things were the main concerns. I think I was the first one to share his thoughts on career. My friends and I... that was the end of it” (Mentor C)

## CONCLUSIONS

Regarding the career, mentor B received support from the school to help his mentee prepare for his entrance examination. However either mentees of mentors A and C lacked interest in their career, or support from their teachers was insufficient due to the atmosphere of their school focusing on learning rather than on career counseling.

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